

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 04268 221739 Z

62

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SUBJECT: FRG REPORTS GDR DECLARATION ON TREATMENT OF WEST  
GERMAN JOURNALISTS

REF: BERLIN 411, MARCH 7

1. FRG GOVERNMENT DEPUTY SPOKESMAN GRUENEWALD TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 21 OF A " BINDING STATEMENT" BY THE GDR THAT THE NEW GDR REGULATION ON FOREIGN JOURNALISTS ( REFTEL) WOULD NOT AFFECT THE COMMITMENT MADE BY THE GDR IN REGARD TO UNHINDERED ACTIVITY OF WEST GERMAN JOURNALISTS IN THE GDR IN AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN BAHR AND KOHL WHICH WAS ATTACHED TO THE FRG- GDR BASIC TREATY.

2. GRUENEWALD SAID THE ORAL STATEMENT WAS MADE BY GERHARD MEYER OF THE GDR FOREIGN OFFICE TO WERNER MUELLER OF THE FRG FEDERAL PRESS OFFICE, WHO HAVE BEEN CARRYING ON TALKS ON PRACTICAL DETAILS OF WORKING CONDITIONS FOR JOURNALISTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. PUBLICATION OF THE FEBRUARY 21 GDR REGULATION CODIFYING RESTRICTIONS ON FOREIGN JOURNALISTS HAD LED TO WIDESPREAD CHARGES IN THE FRG PRESS AND FROM OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES THAT THE GDR WAS RENEGING ON ITS UNDERTAKINGS IN THE BAHR- KOHL EXCHANGE OF LETTERS.

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PAGE 02 BONN 04268 221739 Z

4. GRUENEWALD REPORTED THAT MEYER CONFIRMED OFFICIALLY THAT THE TREATMENT OF WEST GERMAN JOURNALISTS AT THE RECENT SPORTS TALKS IN DRESDEN AND THE LEIPZIG FAIR COULD BE CONSIDERED AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE FEBRUARY 21 REGULATION WOULD BE APPLIED.

5. ON TWO OTHER CONTROVERSIAL POINTS THE GDR WAS SAID TO HAVE DECLARED: THAT THE FEBRUARY 21 REGULATION THAT A JOURNALIST WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR "MALICIOUS FALSEHOODS" CONCERNING THE GDR APPLIED ONLY TO THE JOURNALIST HIMSELF AND NOT HIS HOME OFFICE, AND THAT A JOURNALIST COULD BE ACCREDITED FOR MORE THAN ONE ORGAN AND CONTRIBUTE OCCASIONALLY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES TO OTHERS.

6. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM THE BONN PRESS CORPS, MANY OF THEM OBVIOUSLY SUSPICIOUS OF THE WORTH OF THE DECLARATION, GRUENEWALD SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS SATISFIED WITH THE GDR DECLARATION BUT COULD OBVIOUSLY YET HAVE NO JUDGEMENT ON HOW IT WOULD BE APPLIED IN PRACTICE; THAT WOULD BE FOR THE FUTURE TO SHOW. GRUENEWALD ALSO SAID THE BONN GOVERNMENT ASSUMES THERE IS NO LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF FRG JOURNALISTS WHO MIGHT BE ACCREDITED IN THE GDR; TWENTY-FIVE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE APPLIED FOR ACCREDITATION, OF WHICH ELEVEN HAVE RECEIVED FAVORABLE REPLIES.

7. COMMENT: THE GDR APPEARS TO HAVE YIELDED ON A POINT WHICH HAD BROUGHT WIDESPREAD CRITICISM IN THE FRG, HOWEVER, IT DID SO ONLY ORALLY AND HAS YET TO MAKE ITS OWN DECLARATION, ALTHOUGH GRUENEWALD REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO THE BINDING AND OFFICIAL CHARACTER OF MEYER'S STATEMENT TO MUELLER. MUELLER ALSO SAID HE ASSUMED THE SUBJECT WOULD COME UP IN TODAY'S GRABERT-KOHL TALK AND WOULD BE CONFIRMED AT THIS HIGHER LEVEL. HILLENBRAND

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